



State of Connecticut
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Central Office ~ 25 Sigourney Street, 7th Floor, Hartford, CT 06106

Promoting Equality and Justice for all People

**Testimony to the Public Health Committee
Monday, March 7, 2016**

**R.B. 5541, AN ACT CONCERNING INCENTIVES FOR BUSINESSES THAT EXCEED
ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT.**

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter, Senator Markley, Representative Srinivasan, and members of the Public Health Committee:

The Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities **supports** R.B. 5541.

This innovative pilot program would provide incentives for privately-owned businesses to upgrade their facilities to exceed the minimum requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). The genius of this proposal is that it is an incentive, not a requirement, and thus would not unduly burden businesses within the state. As the agency charged with investigating public accommodation complaints from disabled persons, the Commission has a vested interest in a program which would literally open new doors to these individuals, while at the same time reducing the number of complaints filed against Connecticut businesses.

This program could go a long way to improve the quality of life for disabled persons in the state, and even stimulate local economies. When businesses become more accessible, they will undoubtedly gain new customers. There is also little risk to the state, as it is simply a pilot program, which can be altered or rejected altogether if not successful.

Please give favorable treatment to R.B. 5541. The Commission thanks the Committee for the opportunity to present testimony on this bill.